Female Pre-eminence:

OR THE

Dignity and *Excellency* of that *Sex*, above the *Male*.

An Ingenious Diſcourſe:

Written Originally in Latine, by *Henry Cornelius Agrippa*, Knight, *Doctor* of Phyſick, *Doctor* of both *Laws*, and *Privy-Counſellor* to the Emperour *Charles* the Fifth.

Done into *Engliſh*, with Additional *Advantages*.

By H. C.

1 Eſdr. 3. 12. *Women are ſtrongeſt.*

LONDON,
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TO HER

Most Excellent Majesty,

KATHERINE,

By the Grace of God,

QUEEN of *Great Britain, France,* and *Ireland,* &c.

Madam,

THis *little* Champion, *who long hath* Brav'd *the World in Your Noble* Sexes *Defence, being Arriv'd in Your* Majesties *Dominions, and*

taught to ſpeak the Engliſh *Dialect, is with all Humility proſtrated at Your* Royal *Feet. The Original Treatiſe was* Grac'd *with the propitious Regards of a Great Princeſs,* The Illuſtrious Margaret *of* Auſtria, *afterwards* Empreſs; *whence this mean Tranſlation derives an* Ambition, *not to take ſhelter under any leſs than* Soveraign *Patronage. Yet is not Your* Majeſties *Greatneſs, ſo much as* Goodneſs, *reſpected in this Humble Addreſs; that ſerious primitive* Devotion, *exemplary* Virtue, *and other excellent* Endowments, *that render You more truely* Glorious, *than all the magnificent Advantages of*

Your Moſt Illuſtrious *Birth and Fortune. To Your* Majeſty *this Diſcourſe is* neceſſitated *to Appeal; for 'tis Your bright* Name alone, *that can, being ſtampt thereon, (like Your* Royal Conſort's *Effigies on Coyn) make it paſs* Currant *in the opinion of the* World; *who no longer will be* ſcandaliz'd *at the Title, nor think the Author too Laviſh in* Womens *Praiſe, when they Reflect on Your* Majeſty, *that Great Example of* Female Pre-eminence, *and Excellency, that have* out-done *the moſt daring* Hyperbolies, *and not only Juſtified, but* Surpaſs'd *in Life and Merit, whatever can*

be ſaid in the behalf of Your Moſt Glorious Sex.

That Your Majeſty, Encircled *with all Happineſs*, *may long remain a* Preſident *of* Piety *to this Degenerous Age*, *and find as many to* Imitate *as* Admire *Your Royal Virtues*, *is the Prayer of*

Your Majeſties

Moſt Humble,

Loyal, and Obedient Subject,

H. Care.

THE

IN this *giddy Age* wherein each extravagant opinion finds a welcome, and Conceits more wilde than any *Bedlam-phrenſie*, have been entertain'd with zeal, and promoted with paſſion, an innocent *Paradox* may fairly hope for *Pardon* at leaſt, if not *Applauſe*.

Since (1.) *Tyranny*, (2.) *Injuſtice*, (3.) *Uglineſs*, and (4.) *Folly* it ſelf, have not wanted their reſpective *Advocates* amongſt the *Learned*, I ſee ſmall reaſon why Aſſerting the *Pre-eminence* of the *Female Sex*, ſhould too ſeverely be cenſured. But 'tis unjuſt to debar Readers of that tickling delight they take in finding faults, it being oftentimes all the conſideration they have for laying out their Money. The *Stationers* humour and mine agree, Let them but *buy* the Book, and then (being their own) uſe it as they pleaſe. I ſhall not therefore waſte time, either in *Courting* or *Huffing* the Reader; (for both

(1.) Praiſed by Polycrates, and Iſocrates.
(2.) By *Glauco*.
(3.) By *Favorinus*.
(4.) By *Erasmus*.

both wayes are now commonly used to surprize his good opinion,) but only endeavour to give an Impartial Account of the *Author*, and *Design* of the ensuing Discourse.

To say much of the *noble Agrippa*, were to put an Affront on the Reader, (if he pretend at all to traffick in the Commonwealth of Learning) by supposing him a *stranger* to that Man, who was justly admir'd as the *Prodigy* of his Age, for all kind of Science. That vast *progress* he made, *Tam Marte quam Mercurio*, in *Arms* no less than *Arts*; the Titles and Honours he acquir'd; the respect paid him by most of the Grandees, and famous Men, his Contemporaries; and those *Monuments of Learning*, wherewith he hath oblig'd Posterity; all speak him a Person above the ordinary *level* of Mankind; to be rankt only amongst those few noble *Heroes*;

Quos meliore Luto finxit præcordia Titan.
Whom Titan with a gentle Ray,
Hath moulded of a purer Clay.

'Tis

'Tis true, (like all great Wits) he took no little pleasure in *stemming* the impetuous Tide of popular opinion, as if nothing had been impregnable against the puissance of his parts. Hence he made that desperate (5.) *Onset*, to prove in particular, what *Solomon* was content to affirm in the lump, *That all things are Vanity*; and with an excess of *Gallantry* undertook singly to *duel* all Arts and Sciences.

(5.) His Book of the vanity of all Arts and Sciences.

Nor was this present *Essay* any other than a *sally* of the same *Generosity*, that delights to engage on disadvantages, and bravely to assist the weaker party. After so many slanderers (like ungratefull Mules, turning their brutish heels to kick those Paps whence they receiv'd their first Nutriment) had dipt their keen Pens in Gall, and fill'd their black Mouthes with Calumnies, to sully the Repute of this *fair Sex*, our Author was *too noble*, not to think himself concern'd in its *Vindication*; Common Justice, no less than point of *Honour*, obliging all to succour oppressed Innocency. Hereupon the *Generous Agrip-*

pa enters the Lists, to assert the *Honour* of the Female Party, against the immerited obloquies of the Male, which he chooses to attempt, not after the low, timerous method of an Apology, the shallow Invectives of the Adversaries being unworthy the refute of his Pen; but like a *politick General*, carrying the War into the enemies Countrey, *startles* them with an expected Invasion, and lets them know this noble Sex ought to be the object of their *veneration*, not *contempt*, being in all respects their superiour.

How prudently this Design was undertaken, or how well perform'd, I shall not fore-stall the Readers opinion, so far as to determine; but must confess my self pleas'd with that Diversion I met with in reading the *Original*; and thereupon to have attempted the *Translation*, not without some Additions, and variation, to render it more smooth and gratefull to the present Age, thinking I could scarce better *devote* my vacant hours, than to the service of that *sweet Sex*, which every one deserving

the

the Name of *Man*, cannot but *love*; and to whom, whoever hath not forgot he had a *Mother*, is oblig'd to pay a reverential esteem.

Yet is it no part of our Design to flatter Women, but to put some *check* to the rude, undeserv'd *reproaches*, *cast on them* by the Men: To acquaint the *fair Sex* with *its* natural Dignity, that they may scorn to act any thing unworthy of themselves: to treat them with variety of *real* (not *Romantick*) *Examples* of true *Piety*, exact *Chastity*, sincere, unalterable *Affection*, and other rare, sublime *qualities*; whence inspir'd with a generous emulation, they may strive to *out-vye* these ancient *Heroinaes*, and transcend the excellent *Patterns* here recommended; finding, that it is *Virtue* alone that can *embalm* their Memories, and render them still *fresh* and *amiable*, even then when Age or Sickness have *plow'd* their Faces with wrinckled furrows, and swept away the *sparkling Glories* of their Eyes.

To conclude: If the captious *World* shall a while lay aside its usual severities,

and vouchsafe any *Acceptance* of these our inconsiderable pains, (now confusedly *huddled* up in hast,) we shall use our utmost endeavours in the second Edition to deserve that *favour*, by some further *Additions* and *Embellishments*.

H. C.

TO

To His Ingenious Friend
Mr. *H. Care*:
On his Pains in Translating, and Refining this quaint Discourse of *Female Pre-eminence.*

'Tis bravely done, dear Friend! thus to Engage
For the *Fair Sex*, in this detracting Age,
When vip'rous Tongues so virulently throwe
Venome at those to whom their Lives they owe,
And each base *Fopp* poor Womens Judge doth sit,
Who thinks Railing at them proves him a Wit,
And therefore Dams 'um, *They'r all Whores*, hee'l cry,
Though's Mother and his Sister both stand by: (Name,
Nor want there *Squires o'th' Quill* to wound their
And with foul Ink Bespatter their bright Fame.
But as when Royal *Phœbus* shews his Face,
Those Sporads vanish which usurpt his place;
So all these black-mourn'd screeching Birds of Night,
Are by your Book put to eternal Flight:
Your Book; For what you modestly do call
Translation, if with the Original
It be compar'd, 'twill easily be known,
That the far better part on't is your own.
You adde, correct, and so the Whole Refine,
That 'tis no more *Agrippa's* now, but thine;
He laid the Plot, but you the Language bring,
And giv't a Dress as glorious as the Spring:

Choice Words compos'd in Periods, that surprize
The Ear with most harmonious Cadencies.
Such charming stile, which *France* it self admir'd,
Was thought t'have vanisht when *Love-Day* expir'd;
Our *English* Prose seem'd sunk ever since then,
But now there's hopes you'l Buoy it up agen:
For such fair Blossomes in your Youth, presage
No common Fruit from your maturer Age.
But what dost aim at? (for I must profess,
In this Attempt, 'twill puzzle one to guess)
Weary of *Retail-Love*, by this Design,
Dost thou intend to Court all Womankind?
T' Ingross their Favour, and ambitiously
Affect Loves universal Monarchy?
Or do thy Flames which to some one aspire,
Transport thee, the whole Sex thus to admire?
What e're it be, unto thy pains and wit,
All Ladies must confess themselves in Debt;
And to thee, whence such Ornament they find,
They'r most ungratefull if they prove not *kind*.
Their *Snow-white* Hands thy welcome Book shall hold,
And sometimes wrap t up in some silken Fold,
In their *sweet Rosomes* suffer it to Rest,
(Ah! who'l not *envy* it when 'tis so Blest?)
At other times it fairly shall be spread
I'th *Sun shine* of their Eyes, and whilst 'tis read,
Their *Amber-Breath* and *Rosie-Lips* will lend
Perfumes unto its Leaves, shall never spend.
Henceforth no *Lawyer* they'l retain but thee,
Who plead'st their Cause so well without a Fee.

Philogynes.

To

To His Worthy Friend
Mr. *Henry Care*:
On his Ingenious Treatise, Entituled, *Female Pre-eminence*, &c.

OH! for some *Female-Wit*! only a She
Can write to the full Height, your Eulogy.
What though *Sappho*, and brave *Phillips* be gone,
Th' Muses themselves are bound to see it done.
Methinks I see our *English Ladies* throng
To view *your* Name, that *vindicate* from wrong
Their *Male-transcending* Virtues, which of late
Have suffer'd, by a sharp, censorious Fate
Of foul aspersions, whilst some *Parricide*
(To his *own* Mothers Name) in a full tide
Of *misplac't* Epethites, has rudely sought
To wound (cause One an injury on him brought)
Th' whole *Sexes* Honour, whose *innocence* may think
The *Milk* from's Mother suckt too like his Ink;
Had too much in it of the bitter *Gall*,
Or for *One* Womans Cri e he'd ne're curse *all*.
But let that Person (with impartial eye)
Peruse your Book, he'l *Alphabetic'ly*
Write's Recantation, and a Convert die.
When *I* peruse your Book, I know not justly *who*
Deserves Pre-eminence, the *Female Sex*, or *You*:
For whilst I weigh their *worth*, I'm forc't t'admire
Your *weighty Wit*. As by a well tun'd Lyre

By a Book, entituled, *A Discourse of Women*, shewing their Imperfections Alphabetically.

His Book is so written.

My

My *Ear* being *raviſh't*, dubiouſly I ſtand,
Whether to praiſe the Lute, or *Artiſt's* Hand.
So whilſt you their *Pre-eminence* defend,
Your Wit i'th' proof makes me my faith ſuſpend,
Whether to give it to the *Feminine*,
When you that *writ* it are oth' *Maſculine*;
Not knowing which deſerves the greateſt praiſe,
Or You that *Give*, or They that *Wear the Bayes*:
Both ſeem to me to claim *priority*,
Their *Virtues*, and Your *Ingennity*.
Then this I'le do, I will reſolve *henceforth*
T'Admire Their *Virtues*, and Extoll Your *Worth*.

T. Martinne.

To

To the *LADIES*,
On this Ingenious Discourse of
Female Pre-eminence.

Ladies, at length your vindicated Fames
Appear, like bright, but long concealed Flames,
Which under some rubbish were plac't, to show
That Fire, by Fuel hid, does stronger grow.
'Twas fit your *brightness* should some *stains* endure,
For *Virtue*'s greatest when 'tis most obscure.
Princes though cloth'd with *rags*, are *Princes* still;
Nor yet decreases *good* beset with *ill*.
The stately *Palm* does by depression thrive;
Your *Virtues* dy'd, more nobly to revive.
What said I? they *dy'd*? No, they ne're could dye,
But only fell, prest down by *Calumny*;
From whence they do with double force arise,
Just like recoyling *Rams* in Batteries.
Something to this Brave Authors *Care* is due,
But he the greater *Laurel* yields to you.
Conqu'ring Souldiers, as worthy Men, we own,
Yet the *Prince* that commanded wears the *Crown*.
Thanks come from all, as debts to th' *Author's Wit*;
What's *their* desert then, that thus inspired it.
Ladies,
Defending you, success he never fears;
That *Ship* no sinking dreads, that *Cæsar* bears.

T. P.

TO

To the *Ladies* and *Gentlewomen* of *England*,

On that Ingenious Treatise, Translated, and Augmented, in Defence of their Sex; By Mr. *Henry Care*, Entituled, *Female Pre-eminence*, &c.

LAy by your Needles, *Ladies*, take the *Bayes*;
Expres your Gratitude, i'th Authors praise.
Come, shew the World, your *Wit* hath found a Flaw,
In Great *Apollos* *Male-made* Salique Law.
If you peruse the Book, you'l quickly find,
The Authors *Care*, as well as willing mind,
Hath been imploy'd to serve *your Sex*; and now
With your *own* Hands you ought to Crown his *Brow*.
I'le call him *Author*, or a Name he'l want
To be known by; *Translator* is too scant.
Though He *Translator-like* new *Souls* does give
To th' Virtues of your *Sex*, whereby *they* live;
Yet he's no *Cobler*, does not *Cap*, but *Crown* *Homo, ab Humo.*
Those Virtues, which by *dirt* were trodden
Th' *Invention* of't, I know his *Modesty* (down,
Does give to Learn'd *Cornelius*: But when I *Cornelius Agrippa.*
Peruse *Agrippa*, he I find does move,
Excited by his *Wit*, not by his *Love*; (Soul, *writ it in Latine.*
Whilst the *Translator*, from his gen'rous
(Making your *Virtues* his *Antartick Pole*)
Revives *Agrippa's* dormant Work, and thence,
By's *Love* and *Care* proves *your Pre-eminence*;

Wherein

Wherein by's Wit, and fluent Style, *His Worth*
Extols its self, in setting *yours* forth.
That then the Thanks you owe him, may be seen,
Come crown his Head, (not with a *Willow green*,
But) with such lasting *Bayes* the world may see,
You ne're are backward in *Gratnity*.
Or if your *Modesty* will not permit
To praise them, that prize you, *Lend me your Wit*,
I'le tell the world, (though *now* the Author knows,
I steal my Rhymes from his *transcending Prose*)
The *Female Virtues* do the *Males* excell,
Their *Worth*, our *Weakness*, find no parallel.
What is't that's good our Sex can claim, but thence
The *Female Stx* plead their *Pre-eminence*?
Do we lay claim to Wisdome, Learning, Art?
Therein Learn'd *Pallas* pleads a greater part.
Say we, *our Sex* are valianter in War?
In this *Bellona* does deserve a *share*.
If we dare challenge skill in *Poetry*,
The *Learned Sisters* will our *Rivals* be.
Whoever says, in *Beauty* we out- vy e,
To them I'm sure *Dame Venus* gives the lye.
When all has fail'd, come we to Abstinence,
In that Chast *Vesta* claims *Pre-eminence*:
Their *very Birth's* more noble far, for they
From Man *refin'd* were form'd, *Man* was from *Clay*;
So that there dwelleth in their *Heart* and *Face*,
More *outward Beauty*, more *internal Grace*:
Their *outward Beauty's* greater, *all* confess,
Whence judge we then their *inward Vertues* less.
Do we imagine *Virtue* is so blind,
To dwell i'th *Male*, when th' *Female's* more refin'd?

Wit,

Wit, Beauty, Virtue, can meet and agree
At once in them, whilſt *ſelf-enamour'd,* we
Are too too apt, if th' *Female Sex* but prize
Us, for *One Good, that Good* to Idolize;
* *Narciſſus*-like, that fair and fooliſh Boy,
We'l *dye,* becauſe we can't our *ſelves* enjoy.

* *Ovid.* Met. lib. 3 fin. 425.

Beaſts homage do to *both,* and *moſt Men* do
Give honour unto Women, as their due.
Man conquers by his *Sword,* whilſt *Women* can
Sooner by *words* o'recome Sword-conqu'ring Man;
Such Reth'ricks in their Tongue, none dare withſtand,
Or in the leaſt diſpute what they command.
Where is that * *Hercules* that dare reſiſt,
To turn a *Spinſter* with his clumſie Fiſt?
If Woman require't, he muſt come twiſt a Thread,
Or with her Frowns ſhe'l ſtrike the warriour dead.

* *Ovid.* Ep. Deianira to Hercules.

Imagin'd Cupid hath no other *Bow,*
Than that *half Circle* on a Females *Brow*;
His ſtring's the *Hair* that cleaves unto this *Dart,*
A *glance* is from that Eye that wounds Mans *Heart.*

But *ſtay,*
I cann't *perſiſt, deſiſt* I ſcarcely dare,
I fear the one, the other is not fair;
I've ſtole ſo *much* already, that my *crime*
My *Clergyes benefit* exceeds. In time
I'le beg the *Author*'s mercy, and then I
Will ne're again ſteal *Wit,* it's *Felony.*
Nor dare I to deſiſt; *for* th' Ladies *then*
Too ſoon will find, from *whence* I ſtole my *Pen.*
But though my *Wit*'s not ſo *legitimate,*
And pure as his, *yet* is my *Love* as great,

And

And natural; for, from my *Mothers Breſt*
I ſuck't it in *her Milk*. Now Pen take Reſt,
When to *this better Sex th'aſt* made this *Pray'r*,
T' accept thy Love, whilſt they admire his Care.

T. M.

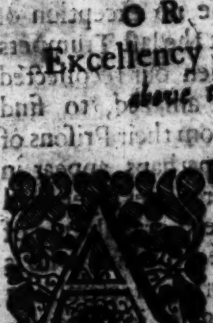
Female

Female Pre-eminence,

OR THE

Excellency *of that* Sex

above the Male,



ALmighty *God*, to whose effectious *word* all things owe their original, abounding in his own glorious Essence with infinite goodness and fecundity, did in the beginning Create Man after his own likeness, *Male* and *Female*, created he them; the true distinction of which Sexes, consists meerly in the different site of those parts of the body, wherein Generation necessarily requires a Diversity: for both Male and Female he impartially endued with *the same*, and altogether indifferent

form of *Soul*, the Woman being poſſeſs'd of no leſs excellent *Faculties* of Mind, Reaſon, and Speech, than the Man, and equally with him aſpiring to thoſe Regions of Bliſs and Glory, where there ſhall be no exception of Sex. For though at the laſt Trumpets univerſal *Alarm*, when our recollected bodies ſhall ſtart up amazed, to find themſelves releas'd from their Priſons of Darkneſs, we may perhaps appear in our reſpective proper Sexes, yet ſhall we not then either need or make uſe of Sex, but are promiſed by him who is *Truth it ſelf*, a Converſation reſembling that of the bleſſed Angels in Heaven. Hence 'tis evident, that as to the eſſence of the Soul between Man and Woman, there can no Pre-eminence at all be challenged on either ſide, but the ſame intrinſick worth and dignity of both, the *Image* of their Creator being ſtampt as fairly, and ſhining as brightly in one, as t'other; whereas in all other reſpects the *noble* and *delicate* Feminine Race, doth almoſt to infinity excell that *rough-hewn, boiſterous* kind, the Male.

This

This may at first perhaps seem an *odd Assertion*, and *extravagantly Paradoxical*, but will appear a certain Truth, when we have prov'd it (which is our present undertaking) not with *empty flourishes of words*, or *gaudy Paint of Rhetorick*, nor with those vain *Logical Devices*, wherewith Sophisters too frequently *circumvent* unwary understandings, but by the *Authority* of the most *Approved Authors*, *unquestioned Histories*, and *evident Reasons*, as likewise with *Testimonies* of *holy Writ*, and Sanctions of both *Civil and Canon Laws*. Since *Names* are signs of *things*, and that all matter presents it self to us cloathed in words, the Learned have advis'd us in all Discourses, First, To consider diligently the Notations or Appellations of those things whereof we intend to Treat, which if we reduce to practice in our present Subject, we may observe, that *Woman* was made at first so much more excellent than Man, by how much she had given her a Name more worthy than he; the word *Adam*, signifying but *Earth*, whereas *Eve*, is interpreted *Life*;

whence it seems, Woman is no less to be preferr'd before Man, than *Life* it self before sordid and contemptible *Earth*. Nor let any weak heads fancy this Argument lame or invalid, because from names it passes judgement on things, since it must be acknowledged, that the *All-wise Contriver* both of names and things, well knew the things before he imposed names on them; and therefore (it being impossible he should be deceived) did undoubtedly bestow on them such fit and apposite names, as might best express their *intrinsick* Natures and Dignity. Nor is it only the *holy Tongue* that intimates this Sexes Pre-eminence, the *Latines* too seem very express in asserting it, amongst whom Woman is named *Mulier, quasi Melior*, as much as to say, *better* or more worthy than Man. And in our *English Language*, although

Some little Wits at Woman rail and ban,
Swearing she's call'd so, quasi woe to Man;
Yet such vain Derivations are to blame,
Since God himself did her Mans help-
(meet *name*. *Women*

Women promote our joyes, partake our woes,
But we men work our own, and their o're-
throwes.

Tis too great a *derogation* from the known *prudence* and *piety* of our *Ancestors*, to imagine them at once so *injurious* and *impious*, as to *brand* this noble Sex with a Name, diametrically thwarting that Character which *Heaven* it self had given of its Nature. We may with much more *probability*, (the only Compass to sail by in an Ocean of Etymologies) suppose the word, *woman*, to be derived, *quasi Woe man*, she being the *Loadstone* of Mans Desires, and the sole adequate Object of his Affections, whom he is to *woe*, court, and settle his Love on; or else from *With-Man*, abbreviated in the pronunciation, intimating the need Man hath of her presence and company, and his dull heartless condition without her. *Society* is the Life of Life, and *Women* the Life of Society, compar'd with whom all other pleasures and diversions are but *flat* and *melancholy*;

whereof the *Protoplast*, even whilest he was in his state of *Innocency*, and had a Garden of pleasure for his Habitation, was not insensible; of whom thus a *minor Poet*,

Adam *alone in* Paradise *did grieve,*
And thought Eden a Desert *without* Eve,
Until God *pitying his* Lonesome State,
Crown'd all his Wishes *with* a Lovely (Mate.
No reason then hath Man *to slight or flout* (*her*,
Who could not live in Paradise *without* (*her*.

However if we shall not be allow'd the *privilege* of contriving for the Honour of the *Female Sex*, such advantageous Etymologies, yet let us at least affirm from the mysterious Learning of the *Cabalistes*, that the *Womans Name* in the original Language, hath a much nearer *Affinity* with the ineffable *Tetragrammaton*, or sacred Name of the Divine Essence, than the Mans, which bears no *Resemblance* thereto either in

Ch-

Characters, Figure, or Number.

But waving (at present) this abstruser mode of *proof*, as a matter *read* by few, *understood* by fewer, and requiring a more ample Explication, than our leisure, no less than the Readers patience, can here allow of, we proceed from *words* to *things*, and come to investigate and display *Female Excellency*, not barely from the *Name*, but in Reality from its *intrinsick* worth and proper *Endowments*; for long *Jangling* about *Nominals*, whilest *Substantes* fleet by unregarded, may argue some smattering in *Grammar*, or *Sophistry*, but no great stock of solid or usefull *Learning*.

Let us then (as we are commanded) search the *Scriptures*, and dating our Discourse with the Worlds original, examine what *Dignity* was allotted to Woman above Man, by order of Creation. We know that all things made by the *Almighty Architect*, may not unfitly be branched into these *two Ranks*, some remaining ever *incorruptible*, others subject to *corruption* and mutabi-

on; in the Creation of both which, Divine Wisdome proceeded in a Method of *Descension* and *Ascension*, beginning with the more *noble* of the one, and concluding with the *most noble* of the other. Hence he first Created those purer Essences, immaterial *Angels and Souls*, (for so the great St. *Augustine* contends, that the Soul of our first Parent was created together with the Angels, before the production of his body) then the *incorruptible bodies*, as the *Heavens*, and those vast numbers of glorious *Stars*, wherewith the same are embroidered; as also the *Elements*, incorruptible too, but obnoxious to various mutations, of which last he composed all other things liable to corruption, beginning with the *meanest*, and so proceeding upwards again by several degrees of *dignity*, to the perfection of the Universe; so as first *Minerals* were brought forth, then sprouted up *Vegetables*, Plants, Herbs and Trees, afterwards *Plant-Animals*, then Living Creatures in order, creeping, swimming, flying, and four-footed, and

last of all he formed our first Parents, after his own similitude, first the Man, and *then* the Woman, in whom was compleated the Heavens and the Earth, and all the glory of them, for after *her* Creation the great Creator rested, as having nothing more honourable to frame; and so well resented the pleasure of having finisht this glorious work so *happily*, that he instituted a day of each seven to celebrate its *Festival*. Woman then being the last of Creatures, the *end, complement, and consummation* of all the works of God, what Ignorance is there so *stupid*, or what Impudence can there be so *effronted*, as to deny her a *Prerogative* above all other Creatures, without whom the World it self had been imperfect; it being impossible the same should be compleated, but in some Creature most *perfect*; and absurd to dream, that *Infinite Wisdome* would conclude so noble a *Fabrick*, with a thing any way trivial or defective: for the whole *Universe* being Created by God, as an entire and perfect *Circle*, it was requisite the same should be made

up,

up, and finisht in such an exact and absolute *particle*, as might with a most strict Tye unite and *glew together* the first of all things with the last. Thus the Woman in relation to *time* indeed was formed last, but in respect of *Dignity*, *first* of all conceived in the divine *Idea*, (as 'tis written, *Before the Heavens were created I chose her*;) the *End*, according to the *Catholick* Creed of *Philosophers*, being ever *first* in Intention, though *last* in Execution: but Woman was the *End*, and last work of God, and introduced into the World, not unlike a *Queen* into her *Royal Palace*, *Paradise* her Metropolitan *Residence*, being fitted and prepared before-hand for her Reception and Entertainment, where the Man seem'd only her *Harbinger* or Attendant. Deservedly therefore doth every Creature *love*, and pay respect and *homage* to her, who is of all Creatures the *Queen*, *perfection* and *glory*; for which cause the wise Man saith, *He glorifies the Generosity of the Woman, having society with God, the Lord of all hath loved her.*

But

But further, in reference to *the place* of her Creation, how much Woman doth surpass Man in Dignity, *sacred Oracles* liberally inform us, witnessing her to be Created *in Paradise*, a place no less noble, than pleasant and delightfull; but the Man *out of Paradise*, in a rural Field, with irrational Brutes. And therefore as great *Personages*, of noble Extraction, though by the malice of *Fortune* reduc'd to *Extremities*, retain still some marks of *Grandeur*, and a *Mean* different from the *Vulgar*, so Woman carries yet an *Air of Paradise*, something that speaks her *sublime descent*, her Inclinations being generally more pious and devout, and her Countenance Angelical, and (as accustomed to that sublime place of her first Birth) she enjoys this peculiar priviledge, that looking downwards, though from never so high a *precipice*, she is not seiz'd with that *dizziness or dimness* of sight, which frequently in such accidents happens to Men. As also if a Man and Woman together chance to be exposed to danger by *Water*, (deprived

of

of all external aid or assistance) you may behold her a long time *floating* on the Chrystal Superficies, the *compassionate Element* seeming unwilling to contract the guilt of destroying so much *Excellency*; whilest the *Man* streight sinks, and (like other gross bodies) tends to the *bottome*, as his proper Center. Now that the dignity of the *place* of Nativity conduces not a little to the *ennobling* a person, both the *Civil Laws*, and *sacred Canons* plainly intimate, and the *Custome* of all Nations confirms; and that not only in *Men*, but in all other *Animals*, yea inanimate Creatures, esteeming each so much more generous and noble, as they come from a more worthy place. Thus *Isaac* commands his *Jacob* not to take a Wife of the Land of *Canaan*, but of the then more renowned Countrey, *Mesopotamia of Syria*: not unlike which is that in *John*, where *Philip* relating, that he had found *Jesus of Nazareth*; *Nathanael* (that true *Israelite*) nimbly queries, If any thing good could come thence?

But

But to proceed; as in *order* and *place*, so also in *matter* of her Creation, Woman far *excells* Man. Things receive their value from the *matter* they are made of, and the excellent skill of their *maker*: Pots of *common Clay* must not contend with *China-Dishes*, nor *Pewter* Utensils vye dignity with those of *Silver*. One Line drawn by *Appelles* his exquisite Pencil, is more to be esteemed, than whole Portraitures perform'd by the *slubbering* hands of vulgar Artists. Woman was not composed of any inanimate or *vile dirt*, but of a more *refined* and purified substance, *enlivened* and actuated by a Rational Soul, whose *operations* speak it a *Beam*, or bright *Ray* of Divinity. Man was taken out of the *Earth*, which of its own nature, with the co-operation of *Celestial Influxes*, is wont to bring forth living Creatures: but *Woman*, above all Influence of the Heavens, or aptitude of Nature, without any assisting virtue, or co-operating power, was formed *miraculously*, by God himself, out of that Ribb taken from dormant *Adam*'s side, where-

whereby Man became *maimed* and imperfect; and thence ever since, as a *Needle* that hath suffered the *Magnetick Touch*, stands alwayes trembling till it looks full on its beloved *North*, so He can never rest, till by taking a *Woman*, and *Incorporating* her with himself, he *retrieve* that loss, and render himself again intire and perfect. The *rare Art* exercised in rearing this *Female-Fabrick*, is not obscurely intimated by the Divine Historian, in his Original Language, where God is said to make Man, but to have *built* Woman; that implying *but common work*, this much *curiosity*, and *contrivance*: insomuch that Man seems little more than the *production of Nature*, Woman, the more immediate *handy-work* of the God of Nature. And therefore for the most part Woman is more *susceptible of*, and replenisht with divine *splendor* and *irradiations*, than Man, of which her incomparable *Neatness*, and *charming Beauty*, may be a pregnant evidence; for *Beauty* is nothing but the *brightness* or *radiancy* of Divine Light, shining in created

Essences,

Essences, and casting on us its *glorious Reflections* from fair bodies, as illustriously as our weak eyes are capable without *dazleing* to behold it. And this most frequently chooseth to *reside* in Woman, rather than Man; whence she becomes beyond all expression *amiable* and *delightfull*, her Flesh *tender* and *delicate*, her Colour *bright* and *clear*, her Hair most becoming, her Locks (*Cupids Fetters*, and the only *Threads* wherewith he strings his *Bow*) soft, long, and glittering, her Countenance more August and Majestical, her Looks more sprightly, vivid and jocund, a snow-white *Neck*, and large smooth high Fore-head, *sparkling Eyes*, armed with irresistable Glances, and yet tempered with a lovely grace and chearfulness, Arched over with *stately Eyebrowes*, (*half Moons*, that boast more Conquests, than the proud *Turkish Ensigns*) which being divided with a beseeming, plain, and equal distance, her well proportioned *Nose* leads to her *pretty Mouth*, and that displaying with an *amorous smile*, the rosie Portals of its soft

soft ruddy *Lips*, discovers a Row of inestimable *Pearl*, her fine small *Teeth*, even, and out-vying Ivory for whiteness, yet *fewer* in number than Mans, as having less occasion to use them, being neither great *Eater*, nor *Biter*. Then her modest Cheeks, whose Colours are so purely mixt, that *Lillies* and *Roses* seem there to contend for *superiority*, and her pretty round Chin, beautified with a *Love-dimple*; a Voice she hath most sweet and inchanting; Breasts which seem two *spheares of Snow*, or swelling *Mountainets* of Delight; long Arms, little Hands, interwoven with a *curious Labyrynth* of Azure Veins; long slender Fingers, nimble Joynts, and all parts of her body *plump*, *juicy*, and *attractive*. Besides, her Gate is so modest, her *Motions* decent and natural, her *Gesture* more free and noble, her *Air* more taking and complacent, and the whole *Form*, *Habit*, and *Symmetry* of her person, *graced* with such innumerable *Charms*, as without injuring truth, we may affirm, That in the whole series of Creatures,

there

there is *nothing* so much to be admir'd, or miracle so deserving to be seen, since in her alone all that have not their eyes *blear'd* with prejudice or envy, may clearly see, the great Creator (who is the *Fountain* of all that is good and amiable) hath *epitomized* the Beauty of all his other works, for those perfections which *sparkle* here and there in them, are collected and *constellated* in her, whom we may call, a *Draught* of the whole Creation in *Miniature*, or a *Copy* of that vast Volume done in exquisite *Short-hand*. Hence all Creatures admire, love, and almost adore her; for so (*) *Pliny* (that great *Clark* of Natures Closet) relates, That the *Lion* which spareth no other Creature, *trembles* at a Woman, and hardly proffereth her that violence which usually he doth to Man; as if Nature had taught that savage Animal the *Respects* due to so *fair* a presence. Nor is it only the *Consent* of fond Opinion, but a very credible *Truth*, That even spiritual Natures, incorporeal Essences, and Dæmons, have many times been *enamoured* on

(*) *Lib. 8. Nat. Hist.*

Women with wonderfull passion; for omitting those Stories Poets tell us, of the *Amours* of their fabulous Deities, as *Apollo* and *Daphne*, *Neptune* and *Salmonea*, or *rampant Hercules* with his *three Wenches*, *Hebe*, *Iole*, and *Omphale*, &c. The holy Scripture seems to intimate no less; as in *Genesis* we find, That the *Sons of God* seeing the Daughters of Men were fair, took of them for their Wives: to which we might adde, (if it be not thought too *Apochryphal*) the ill spirit *Asmodeus*, who so *jealously* Courted the Lady, that he destroy'd all his *Rivals*, in the History of *Tobit*. Indeed these *sacred Rolls* are frequent in recommending this divine Ornament, *Beauty*, and furnish us with various Examples of its power and excellency. Thereby it was *Abigail* preserved her churlish Husbands Life and Fortune, from the fury of incensed *David*; for thus the Royal Captain *accosts* her, *Return in peace, I have heard thy voice, and honoured thy face*, (or as other Versions render it, *Accepted thy person.*) All beauty is either *intellectual*, *vocal*, or

cor-

corporeal; in each of which this Lady is recorded to have been eminently accomplisht, being both prudent in mind, eloquent of speech, and beautifull in person; for which excellent perfections; *David* after *Nabal's* decease accepted her for one of his Wives. *Hesters Beauty* was a means to deliver her people out of the jaws of destruction, to which proud *Haman* had devoted them. And fair *Judiths Charms* infatuating the besotted General, preserved her Nation from a *Ruine* which seem'd inevitable. After those various temptations and tedious afflictions of *holy Job*, Heaven (as if it could not bestow a better earthly *Reward* on such a stupendious and inimitable *Patience*) blest him with three Daughters so *sweet*, *fair* and *attractive*, that they surpast those *Graces* Poets fable of, and the whole World (*Bankrupt* of such other Excellency) could not produce their *Parallels*. Who reading the *Legends* of the sacred Virgins, can but admire in them that transcendent Beauty, which the Church vouchsafes to *celebrate* with such solemn

Eulogies of Honour: especially that immaculate *Virgin*, the blessed *Mary*, whose *Beauty* is said to be so exactly temper'd with *Chastity* and *Holiness*, that though it *captivated* all hearts, yet it never tempted any to *folly*, so much as in *thought*. Nor is Beauty only *esteemed* amongst Men, but seems also to be particularly regarded even by *God* himself, (as indeed how can he but respect his own *Reflection*.) Thus we sometimes read him commanding all the *Males* (even Children) should be slain, but the Women that were fair to be saved alive. And in *Deuteronomy*, liberty is indulged to the *Israelites*, to take one of their Captives to Wife, if she were *beautifull*, which otherwise was unlawfull.

But besides this charming Excellency, which not only invites, but commands our admiration; Woman is endowed with another natural *Ornament*, not vouchsaft to Men; her *Hair* growing to that becoming length, as to veil those more reserved parts, whereof *modesty* commands concealment;

ment; and indeed of that *blushing Virtue* this sweet Sex may justly challenge the far greatest share, it having been oft experienced. (*) That in desperate Diseases, they have chosen to *expose* themselves to Deaths *Imbraces*, rather than to the view and handling of *Chyrurgions* for cure. Nor can Death it self *strip* them of this modest bashfulness; for when *drowned*, (as *Pliny* relates, and Experience proves) they lye in the Water with their *Faces* downwards, Nature sparing their *Modesty*; whereas a Man in such case swims on his *back*, exposing all his shame and nakedness to publick view. Further, the most worthy part of us, whereby we chiefly differ from Brutes, is the *Head*, and of that, especially the *Face*. Now in Men, that noble member the Head, is often by Age or other Infirmity *plundered* of Hair, its native Ornament, and grows deformed with a despicable *Baldness*; from which misfortune Women by an extraordinary priviledge of Nature are exempt. As likewise their Faces remain always smooth and comely;

(*) This Discourse in the Original was dedicated by the Author *Agrippa*, to the Princess *Margaret*, afterwards Wife to *Maximilian* the Emperor, who was her self a fatal Instance hereof; for breaking her Thigh by a fall from a Horse as she was hunting, she would not permit any Chyrurgion to set it, but chose rather to die thereof, than prostitute her modesty. See *Speed's* Chronicle.

ly; whereas Mens are frequently so *beset* with over-grown Beards, and sordid Hair, that 'tis difficult to distinguish them from Beasts; whence by the Law of the *Twelve Tables*, it was provided, Women should not shave their cheeks, lest it might occasion the growth of Beards, and destroy their native pudor and comelines. Now of the *cleanness* and *purity* of this Sex, this *oft-try'd Experiment* cannot but be a proof beyond exception; for when a Woman hath once washt her self clean, let her wash again in fresh Water, and it shall receive no spot or *tincture* of foulness; but a Man never so well washt, as oft as he washes again, will still leave behind some *filth* and *sordities*. Nor may we omit, That Nature hath given Women the greatest *share* in the procreation of Mankind; for according to the opinion of those great pillars of the Art of Healing, *Galen* and *Avicenna*, she contributes most to the matter and nutriment of the *Birth*, which may be the reason that most Children *resemble* their Mothers many times in external fea-

tures,

tures, but almost alwayes in *Genius* and Inclinations; for where Mothers be *simple*, the Children generally prove *Fools*, and where they are *wise*, these are *witty*: but on the contrary, the *wisest Fathers* have most times *Idiots* to their Sons, and foolish Fathers frequently get wise Children, provided the Mother be but possest of a competent stock of discretion. And hence it should seem, Mothers become more fond and *indulgent* to Children, as being sensible of having a greater *share and interest* in them; in requital whereof for the same cause, we are naturally more affected towards our Mothers than to our Fathers, so as we seem but to *respect* our Father, and to *love* only our Mother. And this leads us to make some reflection on that which is our *first Commons* in this World, our Mothers *milk*, a thing of that *Catholick virtue*, that it not only nourishes Infants, cherishes the sick, and restores consumptive and languishing Nature, but may in case of *necessity* suffice for the preservation of life to persons of any age, a notable in-

ſtance whereof we read in *Valerius*, of a poor young Woman, who therewith preſerved her aged *Mother* in priſon, that otherwiſe had inevitably been ſwallowed up by the devouring jaws of Famine, whereby

She ſav'd her Life, who gave her Life before,
And kindly did in kind her Milk reſtore;

Which *ſignal* Love and Tenderneſs not only procured the old Womans *Releaſe*, and a competent maintenance for her and her Daughter, but for a *Monument* thereof the Goal was converted into the Temple of *Piety*, a virtue to which Women are almoſt ever more prone than Men; ſo that *Ariſtotle* recounts *Piety*, *Mercy* and *Compaſſion*, as virtues *peculiar* to this Sex. Nor is it unuſual for Phyſitians to relate, That the heat of young Womens *Paps*, applyed to the Breaſts of perſons worn out with age, doth ſtir up, augment, and preſerve the vital heat; of which *David* not ignorant, when Age had *ſnow'd* her ſilver Hairs on his Head, and robb'd him of

his

his youthfull vigour, procured the fair young *Shunamite* for his Bed-fellow, that he might receive warmth from her sweet *Caresses*, and cherishing Imbraces.

Furthermore, to omit that Women are more *early* ready to accomplish that great end of our being, *generation*, and the propagation of Posterity, than Men; and that stupendious *Miracle* of Nature, their *Longing*, when many times without danger they greedily feed on raw Flesh or Fish, and not seldome on Coals, Dirts, Stones, and other Trash, which without damage they concoct, and convert into healthfull Nutriment: We only at present adde, That according to the Traditions of Philosophers and Physitians, ratified by Experience, Women have obtained this excellent Boon from the indulgence and bounty of Nature, That in all *Diseases* whatever, they of themselves, from their own proper stock, are furnisht with *Remedies*, and can cure themselves, without praying in aid of any forreign Help, or [illegible] *Medicaments*.

But

But that which transcends all wonder, is, that Woman *alone*, without Man, should be able to produce humane Nature, which Man alone never could pretend to; and yet this is commonly affirmed by the *Turks* and other *Mahometans*, to be feazible; amongst whom many are believed to be conceiv'd without Fathers, whom in their own Tongue they call *Nefefogli*. Stories likewise go of *Islands*, where the Women are *conceived to Conceive* by the Wind; but this we dare not admit into our *Creed*, for thereby we should injuriously rob the blessed *Mary* of her Honour, whose alone Prerogative it was to Conceive without the knowledge of Man, when she brought forth her natural Son, *our Saviour*, of her proper substance, being Impregnated by the holy Spirit, and remaining still a pure and *Immaculate Virgin*, such fruitfulness attending the precedent Benediction, that she needed not Mans help in reference to Conception. But of brute *Animals* [illegible] more confidently affirmed, some Females conceive without the [illegible]

and

of the Male; as *Origen* against *Faustus*, delivers on the credit of History, concerning she-Vultures, and Antiquity of certain *Mares*, which went to Foal by the fruitfull Gales of *Zephyrus*; of which the Poet,

Ore omnes versæ in Zephyrum stant Rupibus (altis,
Excipiuntq; leves Auras, & sæpe sine ullis
Conjugiis vento gravidæ.

Standing on tops of Rocks, the wanton Beast
Sucks in the gentle Breises of the West;
Whence she grows pregnant; and such Colts you'l
As fleet and nimble, as their Sire, the wind (find,

What shall we say of *Speech*, that divine Faculty differencing us from Brutes, whereby the Soul puts conceptions into words, and makes her Apprehensions *audible*, which the profound *Tresmigistus* prizes at no lower rate than Immortality, and the Poet *Hesiod* deservedly stiles *our best Treasure*. I appeal to each Mans own *Experience*, (and some I know have had cause to observe it) whether Women are not naturally

more

more eloquent of *Speech*, than Men and their Tongues more *apt* and *voluble* to cloath their thoughts in Language and expreſs their ſentiments on any occaſion. How *ſweet and inſinuating* are their Complements? how *cloſe* and *home* their Objurgations? how *ſudden* their Anſwers? how *ingenious* their Retorts? how *ready* their Excuſes? how *neat* their Evaſions? how *irreſiſtable* their Intreaties? Did not every one of us firſt learn to ſpeak from no other *Tutors* than our *Mothers* or *Nurſes*? and in this behalf Nature (like a carefull Governeſs) ſo wiſely provides for *Humanity*, that ſcarce ever any of that Sex are found *dumb*. Nor is this ſure any mean or vulgar *honour*, but meriting the greateſt *regard*, to ſurpaſs Men in that, wherein Man himſelf chiefly *excells* other Creatures.

But pretermitting theſe more vulgar and prophane Inſtances of Feminine ſuperiority, let us return to *ſacred Letters*, deducing the Rivulets of our *Diſcourſe* from the very Fountains of Religion; where we may obſerve, That Man was

firſt

first *blest* for the Womans sake, God vouchsafing no *benediction* on him till after her Creation, as if before he had been unworthy that celestial favour. Consonant whereunto is that Proverb of *Solomon*, *He that finds a good Woman, finds a good thing, and shall receive a blessing from the Lord.* And that in *Ecclesiasticus*, *Blessed is the Husband of a good Woman, the number of his years shall be doubled.* Nor indeed can any vye dignity with him whose good fortune 'tis to enjoy a good Wife; for (as the same *Siracides* saith) *she is a Grace above all Graces*: and therefore the wisest of Kings calls her, *The Crown*; and the great Apostle, *The Glory* of the Man: Now *Glory* is defined to be the consummation and perfection of a thing acquiescing and delighting in its end, *viz.* when nothing more can be thereto added to *augment* its perfection. Therefore Woman being the *Complement*, *Felicity*, *Blessing*, and *Glory* of Man, 'tis but requisite every Man should love and respect her accordingly; and he that doth not do so, or shall be so *barbarous*

as

as to hate or *dis-esteem* her, is not only a *stranger* to all Virtues and Graces, but a very *Rebel* against Humanity.

Hereto we might, perhaps not improperly, refer those *Cabalistical* mysteries, how that *Abraham* was blessed of God in some respect through means of his Wife *Sarah*; for by taking the Letter *H* from her Name, and adding it to his, he came to be called *Abraham*. As also that *Jacobs* blessing was acquired by a Woman, his Mother: of which sort there are in Scripture several other passages, not requisite here to be unfolded. This may suffice to let us see, that the *blessing* was bestow'd for the Womans sake, but the *Law* given to the Man: to him was forbidden the fruit of that *unhappy Tree*, which set all Posterities *Teeth on edge*; not to the Woman, who was not *then* so much as *Created*. For although St. *Gregory* (*) read the Prohibition, *You shall not eat*, as though it were spoken to both Man and Woman, yet the *Original* delivers it in the singular number. And St. *Austin* (**) taketh away the Doubt, and telleth

(*) Greg. l. 35. Moral. c. 16.

(**) Gen. ad Lit. lib. 8. cap. 17.

eth us, That by *Tradition* the Woman received this Commandment from the Man, not by immediate *delivery* from God; which if ſo, we thence conclude, That by reaſon thereof the Woman might chance more eaſily to break this Law, than the Man; ſince the *All-glorious Majeſty* of God that *commanded*, ſhould take deeper impreſſion in Man, than the *equality* of perſon that *related*, could in the Woman; the roaring of a *Lion* being more trembled at, than the braying of an *Aſs*; the Commands of a *King* more powerfull, than the words of ones *Companion*. At moſt, when Woman ſin'd, ſhe did it, poor Soul, unwittingly, being deluded by the inſinuating Serpent: ſo that it appears the Man ſinned againſt perfect knowledge, and the poſitive Command of his Maker; the Woman out of ignorance, ſeduced by the crafty wiles of the *Tempter*, with whom for a conſiderable time ſhe *diſputed* the matter, and loſt not the glory of the day without a fair *Combate*, though at laſt ſhe fell an unhappy *Trophy* to his ſtratagems: whereas no ſooner

was

was that too-pleasing *Apple* proffered to the Man, but without scruple he greedily *falls* on, and, *Rebel* as he was, would needs taſt its fancied ſweetneſs, whoſe bitter *relliſh* remains to this day, and hath left on us thoſe *original ſtains*, which nothing but Divine *Blood* can fetch out.

That Woman was firſt ſet upon by the Adverſary, may be an Argument of her Excellency; for we know, that the *ſharpeſt* points are ſooneſt blunted, and the *perfecteſt* white moſt eaſily ſoil'd.

Envy ſtrikes at the beſt; who ſtand on high,
Are faireſt marks for fouleſt obloquy.

The *black* Prince of the Air, that ſubtle *degraded Seraphin*, well knew Woman to be the moſt accompliſht of all Creatures; and ſeeing (as St. *Bernard* obſerves) her *amazing Beauty* to be ſuch, as before his Lapſe he had beheld in the Divine Light, and which above the ſublimeſt *Hierarchies* enjoys Communion with God, did thereupon meerly out of *envy*, plot how he might

might dismount her from that Throne of Perfection, and endeavoured by his malitious Darts *first* of all to wound her innocency, and *sully* her glory, whose transcendent Lustre above others, his hellish nature could not but most of all *repine* at. Nor want we further intimation of the fair Sexes *Dignity* and *Pre-eminence*, if we reflect, That when the promised *seed* of Woman, that bruised this cursed Serpents head, I mean our blessed *Saviour*, left the bosome of his Eternal Father, and the *splendors* of inaccessible Light, to become visible in these lower Regions, and veiling the Majesty of his glorious presence, *cloath'd* himself with humane flesh, coming into the World in the *lowliest* manner imaginable, that by his humility he might expiate the *pride* of our first Parents sin; we may with all humble Reverence conjecture, That he was therefore *pleas'd* to assume the *Male*, as the *meanest* and *inferior* Sex; contriving by his infinite wisdom, that since Mans offence had reduced us all into this forlorn condition, (for had the

Woman *only* sin'd, we never had had such cause to cry out, *Oh Adam! what hast thou done?* nor the Apostle to say, *In Adam we all dyed*) satisfaction for sin should be made in *that* Sex, from whom that *ocean* of impiety which hath overwhelm'd the World, had its *first source* and origine. But although this blessed *Immanuel* took not on him the Female Sex, yet he so far *honoured* it, as to assume his Flesh *only* from the Woman; and is therefore entituled, *Filius hominis*, in respect of *her*, not of Man, (which our vulgar Translations seem to have forgot.) This was that stupendious miracle, the contemplating whereof put the admiring Prophet into an *Extasie*, That a Woman should encompass a Man; that is, Christ be conceiv'd in a pure Virgins womb, Impregnated without the *Contact* of two *prolifick* Sexes; that Divinity should be *embodied* in an earthly Tabernacle, and have its glories shut up in a Cloud of Flesh, like *Sun-beams* in Curtains of Chrystal. Nor did our Lord afterwards when he had *dissolv'd* the powers

of the Grave, and destroy'd deaths Empire by his miraculous Resurrection, vouchsafe his first appearance to *Men*, but *Women*, who are not known at any time to have quitted the faith, or *turn'd* their backs on true Religion; whereas Men immediately after his Ascension began to *Apostatize*. Nor can it be proved, that ever any Persecution, Heresie, Schism, or Error in the Church, had Women for its first *Authors*, but alwayes Men. By that perfidious and cruell Sex was our blessed *Jesus* the Lord of Life, and *King* of Glory, betray'd, sold, bought, accused, condemned, crucified, and slain: yea when he was denied by his own great *confident*, *Peter*, and abandon'd by all the rest of his Male Disciples, even *then* the Women left him not, but accompanied him still to the Cross and Sepulchre; and *Pilate*'s heathen Wife endeavoured *more* his preservation, than any of the Men which profes'd belief in him. Whereto we may adde, That almost all *School-Divines* concur in opinion, That the Church at that instant

remained wholly and solely in a Woman, *viz. The Virgin Mary*; and therefore this *Sex* is deservedly by them stiled *sacred* and *Religious*.

But if any object with *Aristotle*, That the Male is generally much the *strongest*, and therefore to be more valued; we desire such to consider, how contemptible a *Glory* 'tis to boast of *big bones*, or *brawny Arms*, and what mean *Trophies* they can hope to raise to themselves by excelling Women, by those *advantages* wherein they must confess themselves *inferior* to hundreds of Beasts. If *strength* alone must give the *pre-eminence*, let *Men* give place to their *Horses*, confess their *Oxen* their Masters, and pay homage to *Elephants*. But in truth they have little reason to *vaunt* of the *strength* or *prudence*, the *valour* or *subtilty* of their Sex, having been alwayes shamefully *baffled* by those whom they *vainly* call the weaker vessels. What Man was ever able to *vye* strength with *Sampson*, whose single Arm no better weapon'd than with an *Asses Jaw-bone*, could at once sacrifice a

thouſand Lives to his fury? yet did this prodigious *Hero* (like *Hercules*) *truckle* to a Diſtaff, and was ridiculouſly captivated by a Woman. Who could boaſt a more ſevere chaſtity than juſt *Lot*, whoſe righteous ſoul did daily ſuffer pangs of grief and indignation, ſeeing the *Sodomites* Debaucheries? yet Women eaſily inticed him to *Ebriety* and *Inceſt*. Who more religious than *David?* yet a bathing *Beerſheba* cauſed him at once to *ſully* the pure Robes of his Sanctity, with the black ſtains both of *Adultery* and *Murder*. Who ſo wiſe as *Solomon*, who ſeems to have been Natures *Privy-Counſellor*, and to have had the honour to behold her *undreſt?* yet was not all his wiſdome *Amulet* ſufficient to guard him againſt Womens *Charms*, but that he ſtill placed more felicity in their *enjoyment*, than in all the curious Contemplations and *Reſearches* of Philoſophy; and even *abandon'd* the worſhip of that God, who had beſtowed thoſe ſtupendious parts on him, to *wantonnize* in their Imbraces. Who more fervent and reſolv'd in the

faith, than *Peter*, the chief of the Apoſtles? yet a *ſilly Damſel* cauſed that great Paſtor of the Church thrice to deny his Maſter.

But methinks I hear ſome *whiſpering*, That all this makes more againſt than for Women, and tends rather to their *infamy*, than *praiſe*. To whom we Anſwer, That the evil of the before-recounted actions redounds chiefly to *Men* the actors, rather than to the *Women*, who were only accidentally the occaſion of them. And if the Suns *Luſtre* by *dazling* our weaker eyes, bring on us any inconvenience, ſhall we accuſe his glorious brightneſs; or rather ought we not to bewail the imbecillity of our own *Opticks*, unable to *Cope* with ſo much ſplendor? Beſides, admitting Women to be in ſome of theſe Caſes *Criminal*, we could (if we delighted to be paradoxical) alledge, That even the holy Scripture ſeems to put a more *favourable* conſtruction on their lapſes and failings, than on Mens. Is not *Rachel* commended, who with a neat invention deluded her Father, in his

ſearch for her Idols? And *Rebecca*, who by fraud procured *Jacob* his Fathers bleſſing? *Rahab* with a *lye* deceived thoſe that ſought for *Joſhuah*'s Spies, and 'tis accounted to her for *Righteouſneſs*. *Jahel* moſt *perfidiouſly* deſtroy'd *Siſera*, as he lay innocently ſleeping in her Tent, whither with an entire confidence he had committed himſelf for preſervation; which *ſignal Treachery* notwithſtanding, 'tis ſaid, *Bleſſed amongſt Women ſhall Jahel be*, &c. Read the Story of *Judith*; obſerve well her diſſembling Inſinuations to *Holofernes*, and thoſe flatteries wherewith ſhe having *lull'd* him to ſleep, cut off his Head, for which ſhe is applauded and extolled to the *skies*. *Lot*'s Daughters paſs uncondemn'd for their Inceſt; and yet their *Father* is not excuſed, but hath his *ſucceſſion* excluded from the Church of God. Laſcivious *Thamar* is defended, and ſaid to be more juſt than the *Patriarch Judah*; and by that fraudulent *Inceſt* obtains the honour to be named in our Saviours *Genealogy*. But 'tis time we *diſ-entangle* our ſelf from

this odd Digreſſion, and *return* to the proſecution of our Subject.

There needs not any more evident *Argument* of this happy Sexes Pre-eminence, than to reflect, That the moſt *worthy* of all Creatures that ever was or will be, was a Woman, *viz. the bleſſed Virgin.* Nor is this any other than one of *Ariſtotle's* own Arguments, That *kind* of which the *beſt* is more noble than the *beſt* of another *kind*, is it ſelf more *noble* than that other *kind*: now of the *Female kind* the Virgin *Mary* is the beſt. In the Male there aroſe not a greater than *John Baptiſt*; and how much that ſacred Virgin, who is exalted above all the *Quires* of Angels, doth ſurpaſs him, there is no *Catholick* ſo ignorant but underſtands. In like ſort we may argue, That *kind* whoſe worſt is worſe than the worſt of another kind, is it ſelf *inferior* to that other kind: but we know, that the worſt and vileſt of all Creatures is Man; whether we underſtand it of that wretched *Judas*, who committed high treaſon againſt the King of Kings, and of whom 'tis ſaid, *It had been good*

for

for him not to have been born; or whether there ſhall hereafter ariſe an *Antichriſt* worſe than he, in whom ſhall dwell all the power of *Satan*. And here by the way give us leave to *remark*, that the Scriptures mention divers Men *baniſht* to eternal torments; whereas we no where read of any Woman *damn'd*. But to proceed;

Nature her ſelf gives a *ſuffrage* to our Aſſertion; for in all her productions, when any thing is to be framed more excellent than ordinary, ſhe makes it a *Female*. Thus the Eagle, the nobleſt of Birds, and Queen of all the winged Troops, is never found a *Male*. And the wondrous *Phœnix* (to which the World is too poor to yield a Mate) is related by the *Egyptians* to be ever of the Female Sex. But on the contrary, The King of Serpents, whom they call the *Baſilisk*, the moſt mortal of all poiſons, is alwayes, and cannot but be a *Male*, as the more proper *receptacle* of venome and deſtructive qualities. Whereas the Excellency and Innocency of this other *ſweet-natur'd Sex*, which

we

we here recommend, is hence abundantly manifeſt, in that all thoſe *black* crimes and crying enormities which *incenſe* Heaven, and *infeſt* Earth, derive their pedigree from Men. *Adam* the *firſt Man*, *firſt lockt* up the Gates of Paradiſe, and by preſuming to tranſgreſs the Law of his Maker, rendred all us his unhappy *Poſterity* obnoxious to *ſin*, and conſequently entituled to the wages thereof, *death*. And his *firſt-born Son unlockt* the Gates of Hell; firſt of all introducing that infernal Train, *Envy*, *Murder*, *Paracide* and *Deſpair* into the World. The firſt that ventured on *Polygamy* was *Lamech*; the firſt *Drunkard*, *Noah*; the firſt ſetter up both of *Tyranny* and *Idolatry*, *Nimrod*, that mighty Hunter, who thereby at once exerciſed his cruelty both on body and ſoul. Men they were that *firſt* eſtabliſht a commerce with the Regions of darkneſs, by treating and making compacts with infernal *ſpirits*, and inventing prophane Arts. Men they were whoſe raging *luſts* firſt tranſported them to offer violence to Nature, whereof the ruines

ruines of *Sodom and Gomorrah* (once famous Cities) *calcin'd* by that unnatural heat, remain to this day a dreadfull *monument*. To read of Men that have abandon'd themſelves to all kind of brutiſh *ſenſualities*; had two or more *Wives*; or been *Adulterers*, or *Whoremongers*, is not at all rare or unfrequent. How many Wives had *Abraham*, *Jacob*, *Eſau*, *Joſeph*, *Moſes*, *Sampſon*, *Saul*, *David*, *Solomon*, *Roboam*, *Ahaſhuerus*, and a numberleſs number more, who beſides their Wives, had Concubines; and yet not ſatisfied, could not refrain *tampering* with their Servants and Handmaids. But we find not *one* Woman (except *Beerſheba*) mentioned, but was content with one Man; nor any that made a *ſecond* Choice, if ſhe had Iſſue by the firſt: for Women are naturally far more *chaſt and continent* than Men; inſomuch that perceiving themſelves unfruitfull, they have oft abſtained from their Husbands Bed, and *brought in* others to ſupply their places, as *Sarah*, *Rachel*, *Leah*; and others *voluntarily offered* their Maids

to

to their Husbands Embraces, to raiſe them up poſterity. But what Man pray ever was there, though never ſo *old, cold, impotent, or unfit for Chamber-practice*, that had either ſo much piety or pity, as to ſubſtitute any in his place, that might Impregnate his Wives fruitfull womb with a generous off-ſpring. We read indeed, that *Lycurgus* and *Solon* (perſons rankt by Antiquity amongſt the wiſeſt of Legiſlators) eſtabliſht Laws to this effect, That if any Man weakned with age, or otherwiſe uncapable of *ſacrificing to Venus*, and performing the *Rights of the Nuptial Bed*, had taken a young Wife, ſhe ſhould not be confin'd wholly to his *fumbling Courtſhip*, but might make choice of ſome ſprightly young Friend, to pay her thoſe *Arrears of Benevolence*, due from her *inſolvent* Husband, whoſe Iſſue ſhould be deemed the Husbands to all intents, and not at all *illegitimate*. But we find not theſe Ordinances put in practice; not ſo much by reaſon of the Mens *obſtinacy* in obſtructing, as the Womens *modeſty and continency*, refuſing

ſing the liberty thereby indulged.

Nor are Examples wanting of divers *Illuſtrious Ladies*, ſurpaſſing the beſt of Men, not only in an exact and rigid *Chaſtity*, but alſo for *entire Conjugal Affection*. Some out of a paſſionate tenderneſs, not enduring to *ſurvive* their Husbands, have violently caſt themſelves into the *Graves or funeral Piles*, together with the *beloved* Corps. Others have thought no *Tomb* but their own Bodies, worthy to *inſhrine* the Aſhes of their deareſt Mates. How *religiouſly* have they preſerved their Loves flames, as pure and undecaying as *veſtal fires?* What means have they left unattempted? What *hazards* have they not embraced, to ſerve thoſe to whom *Hymens* ſacred Band hath united them? Witneſs *Cornelia*, who ſo dearly affected her *Pompey*, that ſhe would not ſuffer him to go into the Wars, (though he were the *Worlds Terror*) unleſs her ſelf in perſon might wait on him. Witneſs *Demotia*, who having loſt her *Leoſthenes*, could not find her ſelf, and therefore through ſolitarineſs made a ſpeedy voyage

voyage to death after him. Witneſs *Sulpitia*, who being adjudged to ſtay, and watched that ſhe ſhould ſtay at *Rome*, when her Husband *Lentulus* was baniſht thence, did yet (notwithſtanding the *Senates* Command, her Princely *Fathers* Charge, the Love of her *City and Country*, the loſs of *Friends and Family*) alone expoſe her ſelf unto the danger of the *night*, beguiled the watchfull eyes of her ſtrict *Guard*, brake forth of the *City*, and *Lacquied* after him along the fields, until ſhe became the *joyfull Companion* of his *woefull baniſhment*, ſo little ſhe eſteem'd all the Worlds felicity in regard of *her dear Lentulus*; and for *her Lentulus* ſo willingy ſhe incurr'd whatſoever *miſery*. Witneſs *Panthea*, *Rhodegune*, *Laodemia*, *Martia*, *Valeria*, *Portia*, *Lucretia*, *Penelope*, *Alcinoe*, and millions more, whoſe ſingular fame herein as it hath cauſed *Antiquity* to inveſt them in eternal ſhrines of honour, ſo may their rehearſal enforce *Poſterity* to receive them as the fruitfull patterns of *imitation*, and ſo far *proſelyte* the bittereſt *Woman-hater*,

hater, as to convert his *averſion* into an *admiration* of this Sexes *Heroick vertues*; eſpecially if in his thoughts to theſe *miracles of Affection*, he adde thoſe *mirrours of Chaſtity*, who have bravely ſlighted all both *temptations* and *torments* to preſerve their Honour, which they not only ſcorn'd to *proſtitute* for *ſordid gain*, or *aiery Titles*, for a *flattering Complement*, or *prodigal Treat*, but alſo withſtood the *Importunities* of Grandees, and defi'd the *Menaces* of Tyrants, valuing their *Virgin-purity* more than *Crowns*, or *Kingdomes*, or *Life* it ſelf; as the *Calidonian Atlanta*, the *Volcian Camilla*, the *Grecian Iphigenia*, *Caſſandra* and *Criſe*, and divers *Lacedemonian*, *Spartan*, *Theban*, and other Virgins, whoſe Names are *embalm'd* in Hiſtory, for the wonder and imitation of *Poſterity*.

But here perhaps ſome *barking Zoilus* may interrupt us, by objecting the fatal Matches of *Sampſon*, *Jaſon*, *Deiphobus*, *Agamemnon*, &c. and thoſe *Tragedies* thence enſuing: in moſt, if not all which, if we narrowly inſpect all circum-

circumstances, we may easily find the Women to be *wrongfully* accused; for scarce ever do *ill Wives* happen to any but *bad Husbands*, and such as by their own vitious Examples *debauch* them, and teach them to be wicked by a *President*. We are more easily sway'd by *patterns*, than by *precepts*: every Example is a most pleasing Invitation, where the eye is guided unto present action, not the ear fed with fained speculation. A *lascivious* Husband will make a *wanton* Wife; a *spend-thrift* Husband an *extravagant* Wife; and a *modest*, *honest*, *carefull* Husband, a *modest*, *honest*, *carefull* Wife. We should therefore take St. *Austin*'s counsel, and such as we would have our Wives appear unto us, the same should we first approve our selves to them. *'Tis an impudent and impious fellow* (saith *Seneca* *) *that requires of his Wife an undefiled Bed, yet he himself defiles it.* For this reason (as *Diogenes* struck the *Father*, when the *Boy* swore, because he had taught him no better) so in some places the *Husbands* are punisht only for the faults of their *Wives*;

(*) *Ad Lucil. Epist.* 94.

Wives; as in *Catalonia*, whoever is *Cuckolded*, payeth a summe of money; and in *Paris*, he rides in disgrace through the City, the Cryer proclaiming these words before him, *So do, so have*; from which our English Custome of *Ridings* is not much different. Nor do these deplorable Consequences alwayes arise from any extream ill habit or disposition of either of the parties, but from their *indiscreet Conjuncture*; their *Tempers* disagreeing cause their Discord, and their *Humours* being contrary, are unfit for so close an union; such jarring Notes can produce no harmony, but rather dismal effects: as a *fiery Vapour* inveloped in the arms of a cold Cloud, breaks forth with amazing *Flashes*, and terrible *Thunderclaps*. A mature deliberation is requisite before such an eternal Bond be entred into: *The mutual Affection of each party*; *the consent of Parents*; *the approbation of Friends*; *the tryal of Acquaintance*; *the special observation of Disposition, Genius, Kindred, Education, and Behaviour*, ought seriously to be weigh'd, before one con-

clude for better, for worse, and tye that *Gordian knot*, which cannot be loos'd till death cuts it. Now then if a Man make his Choice with these due respects, his *Marriage* cannot but prove a *merry Age*, and be crown'd with joy and felicity, because he is guided by *Prudence*, which never faileth her followers. But if not, he may well be stiled a *Fool*, since he is hurried on with passion, and a *giddy fancy*, which easily impoison the best designs. He therefore that is truely wise, cannot but choose a vertuous Wife, and by consequence live *happily* with her; and if any take one that proves vitious, it argues his own *folly*, and so by good reason he ought patiently and without repining to endure her, as the effect of his own *Inconsiderateness*, and not to *aggrandize* his misfortune, by quarrelling with his own Choice.

Besides, as the *Lion* in the Fable reply'd to the Fellow upbraiding him with a *Picture*, wherein was drawn a Man killing a Lion; *Were we Lions Painters, you should see one Lion tearing a thousand*

Men. So had Women but the power of *making Laws*, and *writing Histories*, what Tragedies might they not justly have published of Mens unparalleld villany? Amongst whom are daily found so many *Murderers*, *Theeves*, *Ravishers*, *Forgers*, *Fiercers of Cities*, and *Traytors*, who in the time of *Joshua* and King *David*, *robb'd* in such vast multitudes, that they *march'd* in a posture of War, and made them Captains of their *padding Bands*, (a trick they have scarce forgot at this very day) whence so many *Prisons* become crowded, and so many *Gibbets* loaded with their Carkasses. Whereas on the contrary, to Women we owe the *invention* of all things usefull or beneficial to Mankind, which may either adorn and enlighten our dark *minds*, or relieve and accommodate the necessities of our frail *bodies*. Hence both the *Muses* and the *Graces* are said to be Shees; and the Names of all *Arts*, *Sciences* and *Vertues*, are Feminine, and drawn by *Painters* in the habit of Women. Nor was there amongst all kinds of *Idolaters*, any so

much celebrated for *Learning* and Prudence, as those who paid their Adorations at the Altars of *Female-Deities*; such being the veneration and esteem of this Sex of old, that those three principal parts (which *Antiquity* conceited to be all the World) were *Christned* after the Names of Women; one taking its Denomination from *Asia* the Nymph; the other from *Europa*, the Daughter of *Agenor*; and the third from *Lybia*, the Daughter of *Epaphus*, which is also called *Africa*.

If we particularly take an *impartial Survey* of all kinds of Virtues and Excellencies, we shall find that Women may in each without usurpation challenge the principal place. If we look on *Chastity*, 'twas a Woman first vow'd Virginity to God. If the gift of *Prophesie* be required, *Lactantius*, *Eusebius*, and St. *Austin*, can tell us with what a divine spirit the *Sybils* were inspired: and holy Writ records *Miriam* the Sister of *Moses*, and *Olda*, *Jeremiah*'s Uncles Wife; and no less than four Sisters, Daughters of *Philip*, all eminent Prophe-

phetesses. If *constancy and perseverance in virtue* be regarded, you will find *Judith*, *Ruth*, and *Hester*, so gloriously celebrated by the holy Spirit, *Indices* of those sacred Volumes, that the Books themselves retain their Names. If a lively, vigorous, and stable *faith* be expected, we shall see Men generally come short of Women. The poor Widdow of *Sarepta* believed the Prophet *Elias*, though the things he told her could not but to carnal reason appear in the shape of *impossibilities*. *Zacharias* was reprehended for his Infidelity by the Angel, and struck dumb; but his Wife *Elizabeth* prophesies both with her *womb* and her *voice*, and loudly celebrates the praises of the blessed Virgin-Mother, saying, *Blessed art thou who hast believed the things which are said unto thee by the Lord.* To omit the *Samaritan Woman*, with whom Christ entertain'd Discourse at the Well, and being satisfied with the more acceptable *dainties* of her stedfast faith, refused the Apostles *provision*. And that irresistable belief of the Woman of *Cana-*

nea; and her who had the Issue of Blood, who seem'd to *storm* Heaven, and offer a welcome *violence* to their Saviour, not to be put off with any denial. Was not the faith and confession of *Martha* equal to that of *Peter's*? What a noble constancy of faith and resolution do we find in *Mary Magdalen*, verifying that saying, *She to whom much was forgiven, loved much.* For when the Priests and Jewes, blinded with rage and ignorance, *Crucified* that Messias, whom they had so long passionately *expected*, she stands weeping by the Cross, a flood of *tears* flowing from her *fair eyes*, to see those *streams* of blood and water trickle from his precious *side*. Afterwards she brings spices and precious ointments to *embalm* his body; but missing it in the *Tomb*, enquires of the supposed *Gardiner*, and soon acknowledgeth him to be God; goes with as much *speed* as *joy* to the Apostles, and tells them her Lord is risen: They all *doubt* the miracle, or rather *deride* her narration, as if twere only some dream of that melancholly fancy; but still her con-

confidence continues, and her faith remains unshaken, even when all those *Pillars* of the Church seem'd weak and *tottering*. What shall we say of holy *Priscilla*, who instructed *Apollo*, a person learned in Law, and (as Ecclesiastical Histories inform us) *Bishop* of *Corinth*, which great Apostolical Man was so much a stranger to the pride and conceited humour of our giddy Age, that he thought it no *shame* to learn of a *Woman* what he might teach in the Church.

If we consult primitive Histories, and turn over *Martyrologies*, we shall find, those Women who have testified their faith in the *flames* of Martyrdome, and embraced death and torments, rather than renounce true *Religion*, not to have been *out-numbred* by the Men; all which particularly to enumerate we should be infinite: only give us leave not to forget that wonderfull *Matron*, deserving a place in all good mens memories, who not only with a divine and incredible patience, beheld her *seven* Sons perishing in her sight by cruel Mar-

tyrdome, but also couragiously exhorted them to death; and putting her entire confidence in God, was afterwards her self destroyed for the *Laws* of her Countrey.

To this *good-natur'd* Sex, (as instruments of providence) whole Nations stand indebted for their faith, and owe their *Conversion*. Did not *Theodilina*, the Daughter of the King of *Bavaria*, convert the *Lombards*? *Greisil*, the Sister of the Emperour *Henry* the First, the *Hungarians*? *Clotidis*, the Daughter of the King of *Burgundy*, the *Francks*? and a poor *she-Apostle* of very mean Extraction, the *Hiberti*? each of them illuminating with the bright Beams of the *Christian Faith*, many thousand souls, which before lay groping in the hellish darkness of *Pagan Superstition and Idolatry*. By this method of *Beneficence*, doing good to the better part of those we converse with, and promoting the *eternal Concerns* of Mankind, is true *Honour* only acquir'd. This alone is the *Royal Road* to that immense Glory, which will still remain

fresh and sparkling, when *Pyramids* shall lye buried in *rubbish*, and the *noise* of victories be *forgot*; for so *Divinity* assures us, *They that turn many to righteousness, shall shine as the Stars in the Firmament for ever and ever.*

But lest any *scrupulous* heads should doubt of Womens abilities, to dispatch all those affairs which are usually transacted by Men, let us *joyn Issue*, and try the matter by Examples, and we shall find, That never any *difficult Office* was manag'd, *hazardous undertaking* attempted, or *brave, generous Exploit* atchieved by Men, but the same hath been perform'd as *famously*, and with as much *dexterity and success* in every respect by *Women*. That of old they were *Priests*, is evident; for *Melissa* amongst the *Gentiles* was so eminent in the Priesthood of the Goddess *Cybele*, that all that succeeded her were called *Melissa*. And to pass by *Hypeeanstria*, the Priestess of *Minerva*; *Mera* of *Venus*; *Iphigenia* of *Diana*, &c. it may be nothing unpleasant to repeat those various Names, wherewith *Bacchus's* she-

Priests

Priests were honoured, as *Thyades*, *Bacchæ*, *Menades*, *Eliades*, *Mimallonides*, *Ædonides*, *Eubyades*, *Bassarides*, *Triaterides*, &c. Amongst Gods own people too, the Jewes, *Mary*, *Moses*'s Sister, used to accompany *Aaron* into the *Sanctuary*, and was by all reverenced as a *Priest*. Nor are there wanting at this day many holy *Recluses*, whom Antiquity scrupled not to call (*Sacerdotes*) Priests.

Famous for *Prophesie* hath this Sex been amongst all Nations; witness *Cassandra*; all the *Sybils*; *Moses* his Sister, mentioned but now; *Deborah*, *Huldah*, *Anna*, and others of *old*; besides divers more *modern*, as *Bridget*, *Hildegard*, &c.

In *Magick*, or the inexpugnable Discipline of good or ill Spirits, (which many *talk of*, most *condemn*, and few *understand*,) *Circe* and *Medea* wrought more wonders than *Zoroaster* himself, though most believe him the first inventer of these *black* Arts.

For profound knowledge in the abstrusest parts of *Philosophy*, were emi-

nent,

nent, *Theana*, *Pythagoras* his Wife, and his Daughter *Dama*, excellent at explaining her Fathers mysterious Sentences; *Aspasia* and *Diotima*, Scholars of *Socrates*; *Philesia* and *Axiochia*, both Disciples of *Plato*; *Plotinus* extolls *Gemina* and *Amphiclea*; *Lactantius* applauds *Themiste*; the Christian Church glories in St. *Katherine*, a Lady that alone for Learning surpast all the wisest Men of that Age. Nor may our Memory here without an impardonable crime, let slip the mention of *Longinus*; the Philosopher's excellent Pupil *Queen Zenobia*, for her vast knowledge in Letters, and clear understanding, called *Ephinissa*, whose devout Works *Nichomachus* rendred into *Greek*. If we proceed to those *soul-charming* faculties, Oratory and Poesie, behold a whole Troop *crowd* about us; as *Arnesia*, sirnamed *Androgenia*, *Hortensia*, *Lucretia*, *Valeria*, *Copiola*, *Sappho*, *Corinna*, *Erinnya*, *Telia*, or *Telsia*, sirnam'd the *Epigrammatist*, *Sempronia* in *Salust*; and amongst the *Lawyers*, *Calphurnia*.

'Tis a proud self-flattering Conceit of

of the *Bearded-Tribe*, to arrogate all Learning to themselves, or think the *noble* Female Sex incapable of making *as generous flights* towards the top of *Parnassus*, as they. Womens *Phantasies* are much more quick and searching; their *memories* as tenacious and faithfull; their *judgements* as solid; all their faculties as ready; and their *thirst* after knowledge and fame no less *intentive*, than Mens. Why then should they not with the same *advantages*, make at least an equal progress in *Literature*? 'Tis true, our *male Dictators* strive to *monopolize* Learning, and having by a brutish custome *barr'd* the Doors of the Muses Temple against Women, do now pretend they are *unable* and unfit to enter: yet vain are these their envious *designs*, to depress or *cloud* the Glories of this Sex: for indeed Women *by nature alone* do excell the Professors of Arts, even in those particular Arts which they pretend to; those *Sciences* and Accomplishments which Men acquire not without a vast expence of time, waste of spirits, and other inconveni-

veniencies, being all in Women as it were *innate and con-natural.* That this may not seem a *naked affirmative,* or inconsiderate *Rant,* be pleas'd to consider, That although Grammarians *proudly* boast themselves Masters of the Art of well-speaking, as if all must be *dumb,* or at least barbarous, that have not submitted to the tyranny of their *Ferula*; yet we learn far better to speak from our *Mothers and Nurses,* who are continually engaging us to *prattle,* and correcting the errors of our *lisping Tongues,* than from the crabbed Instructions of those supercilious Pedagogues. 'Twas *Cornelias* Industry that form'd her Sons the *Gracchi*'s Tongues, to such an *admired* height of Eloquence; nor had the King of *Scythia*'s Son *Siles* any other *Tutor* to teach him the Greek Tongue, but his *Mother Istrinea.* When *Colonies* are planted, and several Nations *mingled,* do not the Children always retain their *Mothers Languages?* For which reason, both *Plato* and *Quintilian* have been so exact in giving Precepts for the choice of a fit *Nurse,* that Childrens speech

may

may rightly be *ordered*, and discreetly *moulded* from their infancy.

Are not the *Poets* in their trifling *fables* surpast by hundreds of *old Women's*? and *Legitians* in their contentious brawlings out-done by each *Billingsgate-Fishwife*?

Your *smooth-tongu'd* Orators seem almost *Almighty* in words, and able at pleasure to raise or calm the passions, by the *Magick* of their Rhetorick; yet where was there ever any of them so happy, but that *a pretty obliging Wench* would out-go him in the Art of *perswasion*? What subtle *Arithmetician* is able to *mis-reckon* a Woman when he goes to pay her a *Debt*, or cheat her of a penny by all his rules of *practice or falshood*? What *Musitian* can equal her for *singing*, or dare compare the *squeeking of his Crowd* to the melody of her *ravishing voice*?

A silly *Gammars* predictions have often been answered with suitable *events*; whilest the *Prognostications* of great *Mathematicians*, and famous *Star-readers*, (that boast themselves of Heavens

Cabi-

Cabinet-Councel) serve only to prove their Authors either *lying fools, or flattering knaves.* How frequently is the Art of the most eminent *Physitians* forc'd to veil to the skill of a *Countrey-Matron?* who with an ordinary *Receipt* chases away those *sullen* Distempers, which bid *defiance* to all the *slops and hard words* levied against them by *Master Doctor.*

Nor need any of these *Artists* resent this ill, since *Socrates*, the wisest of Men (if you'l credit an *Oracle*) thought it no shame in his wisest Age to learn of *Aspasia*: nor did *Apollo* the Divine blush to receive instruction from *good Priscilla.*

Having thus briefly vindicated the *fair* Sexes Reputation in the Schools, we next proceed to the *Court and Camp*, and find them there not at all deficient in *policy* of State, or that civil prudence requisite for the conduct of humane affairs: not so ignorant as many imagine, in *State-craft*; that refined skill which *disembroils* the Intrigues of the Court; which teacheth the Science of War, and

and the dexterity of treating for peace; Womens *Wits* having generally been esteemed more quick and ready in *sudden* exigents, and most fertile and dexterous for the plotting and carrying on any *politick* design, or subtile contrivance.

No Stratagem did warriour e're devise,
Which first he learn't not from their catching eyes.

Of these *She-Machiavils* and *Feminine Hectors*, History copiously affords us *Examples*; as *Opis*, reverenced by the *Ægyptians* as a Deity; *Plotina*, the Wife of *Trajan*; *Amalasuntha*, the Queen of the *Ostrogothi*; *Deborah*, to whom in all cases of difference the *Israelites* repair'd for judgement, and rescu'd themselves from *slavery*, by a memorable victory under her conduct. *Semiramis*, who for forty years with much honour and renown governed the *Assyrians*; and *Candaces*, Queen of *Ethiopia*, no less eminent for prudence, than power and magnificence, of whom some men-

mention is made in the *Acts*: but wonders are related by that worthy Regiſter of Antiquity, *Joſephus*, for *laying* the foundations of Empires, and building Cities; *Semiramis*, *Dido*, and the *Amazons*, for both *skil and ſucceſs* in War; *Thomiris*, Queen of the *Maſſageta*, who conquer'd *Cyrus*, that great Monarch of the *Perſians*; as alſo *Camilla*, of the Nation of the *Volci*; and *Kaliſca*, of *Bohemia*, both potent Queens. To whom might be added the *Indian Pande*, and the Women of *Phocia*, *Chios*, and *Perſia*; with many other *Illuſtrious Viragoes*, who in the greateſt *exigencies*, and moſt deſperate *ſhocks* of Fortune, have preſerv'd their *gaſping* Countreys: of whom the noble *Judith* and fair *Heſter* deſerve to lead the *van*, as the *glory* of their own, and *ſhame* of the other Sex. Whilſt *Rome* ſtands, the Name of that grave Matron *Veturia*, will be famous, who by checking the inordinate rage of her Son *Coriolanus*, preſerv'd that Emperial City, the young Captain at his *Mothers* perſwaſions deſiſting from his unnatural hoſtility againſt his *Mother-*

Countrey. Nor can the brave *Artemisia* want her due applauses, who destroy'd the *Rhodian* Navy that invaded her, and to return the *civility* of their intended visit, subdued their Island, erecting an ignominious *Statue* in the midst of their chief City, to remain there as a perpetual *brand* of infamy and reproach.

The *English Nation* were most ungratefull, should they ever forget their Obligations to this Sex, to whose courageous resolution alone, they owe their deliverance from the insufferable tyranny of the *Danes*. Nor is the most *Christian King* less engaged, whose tottering Crown was once refixt on his Ancestors Head by a *Female* hand. That strange ridling Prodigy of valour, *Joan of Arc*, (celebrated by some as a *Saint*, and branded by others for a *Witch*,) when the *English* had almost spred their victorious *Ensigns* over the whole Kingdome of *France*, and wanted little to compleat its total conquest, taking *Arms* like an *Amazon*, *arrested* their fortune, put a Stop to the *torrent* of their victo-

victories, and by degrees reſtor'd the *withering de Lucs* to their former luſtre; in honour of which gallant Enterpriſe, a *Statue* ſacred to her memory ſtands erected on the Bridge at *Orleans*.

An innumerable *Catalogue* could we here produce of moſt excellent Women, out of both ancient and modern Hiſtories of the *Gracians*, *Romans*, and other Nations; *Plutarch*, *Valerius*, *Boccace*, and many others, having written largely of them: but we ſtudy brevity, that our Work may not overflow its intended limits; for we fancy not thoſe over-grown Treatiſes which are divided into *Tomes and Volumes*; ſo that we ſhall not here ſay ſo *much* in Womens praiſe, but that we ſhall conceal *much more* that might, and deſerves to be ſaid; being not ſo extravagantly ambitious, as to undertake to comprehend or diſplay the infinite Excellencies and Virtues of that Sex, in ſo *curt* a Diſcourſe. What *Mortals* Pen, or *Angels* Tongue, is ſufficient to enumerate and proclaim *their* praiſes, on whom depends our very *being*, and the *preſerva-*

tion not only of particular Families, and Republicks, but of *all humane kind*, which without them would soon decay, and the World in one *Century* droop into a solitary Desart.

This *Rome*'s first Founder well understood; and rather than *want* Women, chose to incur a sharp hazardous War with the *Sabines*, for stealing away their Daughters, without whom his intended Empire had quickly *mouldred* away, and never arriv'd at that *proud Grandeur*, to give Laws to all the World. Upon which quarrel, when afterwards the *Sabines* intending a *rescue*, had taken the *Capitol*, and a bloody fight was begun in the midst of *Romes Market-place*, the good-natur'd Women rushing in between both Armies, their *Husbands* on the one side, their *Fathers* on the other, procured by their entreaties a *cessation* from that unnatural conflict, which ended in an indissoluble *peace*, both Nations being *glew'd* together in perpetual amity. Whereupon *Romulus* caused the Womens Names to be *inrolled* in the Courts; and by com-

mon consent it was *Enacted*, That none of them should be put to grynde, or do *Kitchin-Drudgery*, or any such servile employment; nor should receive any thing as a gift from her Husband, nor he from her; that they might not dream of any particular propriety, but know, that whatever either of them enjoy'd, was common to both: for he that makes a *present* to his Wife, offers an *injury* in a *Complement*, pretending to entitle her to that by his *donation*, which is hers before in her own *right*. This gave birth to that *Custome*, when the *Bride* was brought home, to use these solemn words; *Ubi tu, Ego*; (that is) *Where you are* Jack, *I'le be* Jill; *Where you are Master, I will be Dame.*

After the expulsion of Kings, when the *Forces* of the *Volsci*, who had espoused the *Tarquins* quarrel, were advanc'd within five miles of *Rome*, they were *beat back* by the sole courage of the Women; for which *gallant service* a famous Temple was built, dedicated to *Female-Fortune*; and many notable marks of dignity and honour conferr'd

on them by Decrees of the Senate: as to have the *upper* hand in walking, the Men *standing* up, and giving place when they pass by; as likewise leave to wear Purple with Gold-fringe, Earrings, Jewels, Gold Chains, and other ornaments. And by a Law of later *Emperours*, Women were enabled to succeed in Inheritances, and take Administrations; and suffered to have their *Funerals* publickly celebrated with *Encomiastick* Orations, as well as the most Illustrious Men. And twas provided, That in all Edicts prohibiting the wearing of any *Apparel*, Women should not be included: an Indulgence they well *deserv'd*, since they knew so well how to part with their Ornaments on a good *occasion*. For when *Camillus* had vow'd a Present to *Apollo* of *Delphos*, and the whole City could not yield Gold enough to make up the summe, the Women freely *open'd* their Cabinets, and brought in their Rings, Bracelets, *&c.* so ready were they to support the *honour* of their Countrey, though with the loss of what their Sex is said most to

delight

delight in. In the War which *Cyrus* waged againſt his Grandfather *Aſtiages*, the *Perſian* Army being put to flight by the proweſs of the *Medes*, was *reinforc'd* by the ſeaſonable reproof and exprobration of the Women; for thereupon ſhame and indignation infuſing freſh courage, they fac'd about again, routed their purſuers, and came off, crowned with the *Lawrels* of victory; for which good ſervice *Cyrus* ordain'd, That as oft as the Kings of *Perſia* entred the City, they ſhould beſtow on each Woman a *Medal*, or piece of Gold; which was frequently performed accordingly; yea, and *doubled* to ſuch as were with Child.

Thus were Women, by thoſe ancient Princes of *Perſia*, and the valiant *Romans*, from the very infancy of their Empire, treated with all kind of reſpect and honour; and to this day, by how much each Nation is more *civiliz'd*, and refin'd from Barbariſm, ſo much greater liberty and honour do Women there enjoy. Nor is there a ſurer Character of a noble *birth*, or any thing that

ſooner diſcovers a *generous education*, than a reſpective carriage, and complacent deportment towards *Ladies*.

That the renowned *Juſtinian* had a particular veneration for this Sex, is evident; for that he thought fit to conſult his *Wife* in the modelling of his Laws, and framing thoſe *Inſtitutes*, whoſe excellent prudence all ſucceeding generations have admir'd: and no wonder, ſince the *Law* it ſelf affirms, That the Wife ſhines in an equal *ſphear* of honour with the Husband; ſo as how much ſoever he is *preferr'd* in dignity, ſo much ſhe too, is advanc'd. Thus an *Emperours* Wife is ſtiled *Empreſs*, and a *Kings*, *Queen*, and a *Prince's*, the *Princeſs*, and *Illuſtrious*, though they are never ſo meanly deſcended. So *Ulpian*, *The Prince* (he means the Emperour) *is abſolv'd and free from the Coercive power of the Laws, but the Empreſs his Wife, though of her ſelf ſhe be not freed therefrom, yet her Husband conferrs on her the ſame priviledges which he hath himſelf.* Hence by the Civil Law 'tis permitted to noble Women to

judge,

judge, arbitrate, purchase, sell, and *decide* controversies between their Tenants, or Vassals, and sometimes to retain peculiar Servants, and give *Name* to a Family, so as the Children shall be called by the *Mothers* Name, not the Fathers, with several other priviledges, in relation to their *Dowers*, expressed in divers places throughout the whole body of the Law: Which also provides, That a Woman of honest fame shall not be *imprisoned* for Debt; and that the Judge who shall commit her, shall in such case be liable to capital punishment: And if she be apprehended on suspition of any crime, she shall be put into a *Monastery*, or delivered to the custody of persons of her own Sex. Moreover, a Woman in the eye of the Law is of a *better* condition than a Man, so that in the very same kind and degree of Crime, he is esteemed a *greater* offender, and worthy of severer punishment than she. Hence a Man found in *Adultery* is punisht with death, the Woman only shut up in a Monastery. Many other *priviledges* of Women you

may read, collected by *Azo*, in his ſumme on the Title, *Senatuſconſultum Velleianum*, and *Speculator of Renunciations*, and others.

No wonder then if thoſe ancient *Legiſlators*, Men grave for their wiſdome, and prudent for ſcience, *Lycurgus*, I mean, and *Plato*, underſtanding by their diligent *Reſearches* into the moſt profound parts of Philoſophy, that Women were not a whit either for *excellency* of wit, *ſtrength* of body, or *dignity* of nature, inferiour to Men, but equally able in all reſpects whatever; did thereupon ordain, That Women ſhould *exerciſe* together with Men in Wreſtling, and other publick games and paſtimes; and as well as Men, make an inſpection into all things appertaining to *Martial* diſcipline, as ſhooting, ſlinging, caſting Stones, darting, handling of Arms, both on foot and horſeback, pitching of Tents, Leading up, Marſhalling, and ſetting Armies in Array, *&c.*

Let us peruſe the Volumes of credible *Hiſtorians*, and they will aſſure us, That

That by the custome in *Getulia*, *Bactria*, and *Galletia*, the Men devoted wholly to ease, made much of themselves at home, whilst the *Women* tilled the Ground, built, negotiated, rid up and down, went to the Wars, and transacted all those affairs which amongst us are manag'd by Men. That amongst the *Cantabrians*, the Men brought the Women *Portions*; the Brothers were dispos'd of in *marriage* by the Sisters; and the Daughters were the Heirs. That amongst the *Scythians*, *Thracians*, and other Nations, all Offices were undertaken by Women, as well as Men. And in their *Treaties* Women were concern'd; as appears by the *League* made between *Hannibal* and the *Celtæ*, in these words: *If any of the Celtæ complain that he is injured by any of the Carthaginians, let the Magistrates or Commanders of the Carthaginians who shall be in* Spain, *judge thereof. If any Carthaginian shall receive damage from any of the Celtæ, let the Women be Judges of the same.* Nor did the ancient *Brittains* and *Picts* regard any difference of *Sex*, for the soveraign

veraign Command, but usually went to War under the *conduct* of Women, as both *Tacitus* and *Beda* witness.

From what hath been said, appears conspicuously, as if written with *Sunbeams* on a Wall of Chrystal, That this Sex are not *incapable* of, nor were in the primitive and more innocent Ages of the World, *debarr'd* from managing the most arduous or difficult affairs, till the *tyranny* of Men usurpt the dispose of all business, and *unjust Laws*, *foolish Customes*, and an *ill mode* of education, *retrencht* their liberties. For now a Woman (as if she were only the *pastime* of Mens idle hours, or a thing made meerly for *trifling* Courtiers to throw away their *non*-sensical Complements on) is from her *Cradle* kept at home; and as incapable of any nobler imployment, suffered only to *knit*, *spin*, or practise the little curiosities of the *Needle*. And when she arrives at riper years, is delivered to the tyranny of a *jealous-pated* Husband, or cloistered up in a Nunnery; all publick *Offices* are denied them; implead, or sue at Law

in

in their own Names, though never so prudent, they must not; no Jurisdiction they can exercise; nor make any *Contract* that is valid without their Husbands license; and several other hard *Impositions* they have laid on them.

By which unworthy, *partial* means, they are forc'd to give place to Men, and like wretched *Captives* overcome in War, submit to their *insulting Conquerors*, not out of any natural or divine reason, or neceffity, but only by the prevalency of *Custome*, *Education*, *Chance*, or some *tyrannical* occasion: yet might Womens excellent good natures possibly perswade them calmly to undergo this *servitude*, did not the male-usurpers adde *shame* and *reproach* to their tyranny. But as all *slavery* is miserable in the account of generous minds, so that which comes accompanied with *scorn* and *contempt*, stirs every ones indignation, and can be endur'd by none whom *Nature* does not intend for slaves, as well as *Fortune*. Although 'tis evident, That unto *Woman-kind* the World owech *half* of its life, and Man is indebt-

indebted the *whole* of his love, she being the only adequate object of his affections on earth; yet *Custome* spreading like some Epidemick Contagion, hath made it common to undervalue this Sex, and *bespatter* their reputation with all kind of opprobrious Language, and slanderous *Epethites*. Each idle *Poetaster* hath a Rhime to reproach them; and every phantastick *Gull* a scandalous Sonnet or *musty* Proverb to impeach their Honour; particular reasons whereof, many may be gather'd from the divers humours of their *Accusers*. *Some* will *dispraise* that Woman, whom before they *ador'd*, because her *modesty* hath repell'd their *unchast* desires. Some turn their *amorous* Complements of wooing, into a barbarous stile of *railing*, because for want of *desert* they obtain not *Love*. Many love not Women, because they know not how to love them; and *most* of all Men being evil themselves, *love* but few things that are good, and thence entertain Women with *hatred*. Some to make *ostentation* of their parts, and acquire the title

title of *wits*, *few* with any shew of reason, and *none* on any just cause, have yet filled the World with Pamphlets, things no less *idle* in themselves, than *disgracefull* to Women. But Oh unmanly Men, and *stain* of your Sex! Is this a point of Manhood, or any ornament of your valour, to busie your selves for disgrace of Women? Is this the thankfull *Tribute* you return to the Authors of your Being? Is this the *recompence* you afford them for their *sorrow and pains* at your Birth, for their *care and diligence* in your Infancy, for their *love and tenderness*, their *assistance and endearments* throughout your Life? Such and so many obligations should not (methinks) be so easily *cancelled*, not such courtesies *forgotten*, much less so injuriously *remembred*, as to be repaid with causeless *detraction*, and immerited *invectives*. But why speak we to these Men of *Gratitude*, the greatest of vertues, who never were acquainted with any virtue at all? It can be no great dishonour to be *evil spoken* of by them, who never learn'd to speak *well* of any.

We

We shall not therefore so *vainly* spend our own or the Readers time, as to take notice of all those *black* scandals by them cast on this *fair* Sex, they being only *fluxes of gall*, or the *purgings of idle brains*: only one we must briefly examine, which seems more plausible and passes for currant in the *vogue* of the World; and that is, their terming Women, *Necessary Evils*. This is indeed the common Tenure, and the *Comical Wits* think they have very *judiciously* spoken, when thus they have defined them; which yet in truth is no other than an *egregious Solecism*, an errour almost *blasphemous*. That they are *necessary*, we needs must grant; since he that made Man, saw it was not good that Man should be without them. That they are *Evils*, we utterly deny; since he that made Woman, saw that all he made was *good*. Is Woman *good* then in the judgement of God, and in your conceit also *necessary*? then change your phrase, and henceforth stile her, *A necessary good*. Those very Terms, *Necessary*, and *Evil*, are inconsistent:

All

All things that are *neceſſary* for Man, are *good*; *food* is *neceſſary*, it is *good*; Apparel *neceſſary*, it is *good*; the Fire, the Air, the Earth, the Water *neceſſary*, they are *good*; Women *neceſſary*, therefore *good*. For elſe if we ſuppoſe God hath bound Man in ſo *hard* a Condition, that ſome things are *neceſſary* for him, yet *evil*, we both *impair* the wiſdome of God, and *detract* from his goodneſs.

To conclude: If Woman be ſo *neceſſary* for Man, and he of himſelf ſo *weak* and *impotent*, that he could not even in *Paradiſe* live without her; If *Abraham* the *friend* of God be commanded, by no leſs Authority than the voice of Heaven, to *hear* his Wife *Sarah whatſoever* ſhe ſhould ſay to him; If *Nature* have ſo illuſtriouſly markt out Women for the moſt *excellent* of all Creatures, and crown'd them moſt prodigally with the choiceſt of her ornaments; Since they in no reſpect come ſhort of the moſt celebrated *Heroes*, and that their Names and gallant Actions have *ſwell'd* the Records of Fame, and ſtand *Regiſtred* there with

ſuch obliging *Eulogies*; what remains but that without delay we render them thoſe *Homages* which ſuch extraordinary Merits *challenge*? Let us no longer *diſ-eſteem* this noble Sex, or abuſe its goodneſs, or uſurp on its *Prerogative*. Let us allow them thoſe *Priviledges* which God and Nature have inveſted them with. Let us *re-inthrone* them in their *Seats of Honour* and *Pre-eminence*. Let us regard them with that *Reverence* that is due; pay them that *Devotion* that becomes us; and treat them with all that *reſpect and veneration* which belongs to ſuch *Terreſtial Angels*.

Thus have we *endeavoured* to ſhew the *Pre-eminence* of the Female Sex, from the *name*, *order*, *place*, and *matter* of Creation; and what *Dignity* bounteous Heaven hath vouchſaſt thereto above the Male. We have alſo promiſcuouſly, yet plainly, demonſtrated the ſame from *Divinity*, *Nature*, *Humane Laws*, various *Authority*, *Reaſon* and *Examples*; yet have we not ſaid ſo *much*, but that we have left *much more* unſaid; for we took not up our Pen in this

this Cauſe out of *ambition*, or deſign to *purchaſe* Applauſe by *oſtentation* of Wit, or Reading; but meerly as *conſcious* of our Duty, and out of *loyalty* to Truth, that we might not ſeem *ſacrilegiouſly* to *rob* this worthy Sex of its due Praiſes, by an *envious* ſilence.

But if *ſome* more curious Head ſhall find (as eaſily he may) any *Argument* by us omitted, which he ſhall judge proper to be here inſerted, we ſhall be ready to acknowledge our *Obligations* to him; eſteeming it a *Courteſie*, not an *Injury*, if by his Wit and Learning he render this *well-intended* Work of ours *better*; to which, leſt it ſwell to too great a *Volume*, we here affix a final *Period*.

FINIS.

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